

~~could actually get all the way into her—not often—she was as strong as the Hound, yes, so much like bitches he had seen snarling and snapping at a male dog's genitals. Klara did not snarl or snap, she just jumped up on the altar, alone, always alone, she was so private that he wanted to put his~~ mouth where she was most private, and then he would slip the Hound into her mouth. He would show her where the real Devotion was located.

Yet, on this hot summer night when he tried to open her closed legs, pushing harder than ever with the force of his arms, there came a moment when his breath overtook him. A startling pang! For one instant, he felt as if he had been felled by thunder. Was that his heart? Was he the next to die?

“Are you all right?” she cried out as he lay beside her seeking to breathe again, his wind going in and out with a rasp that sounded as terrible as the last winds of their lost children.

“All right. Yes. No,” he said, and then she was on him. She did not know if this would resuscitate him or end him, but the same spite, sharp as a needle, that had come to her after Fanni's death was in her again. Fanni had told her once what to do. So Klara turned head to foot, and put her most

unmentionable part down on his hard-breathing nose and mouth, and took in his old battering ram to her lips. Uncle was now as soft down there as a coil of excrement. Even as she said this to herself, she had plopped him into her mouth with an avidity that could come only from the Evil One himself—that she knew. She knew from where the impulse had come. So, now they both had their heads at the wrong end, and she knew—the Evil One was also with them. She knew. He had never come closer.

And now, the Hound began to come to life. Right in her mouth. It surprised her. Alois had been limp, so limp. But now it was happening. She was giving life to her man. She felt such power. Alois was stronger, and before long, he was revived, yes, fully revived, a man again! And now, his mouth lathered with sap and juice from her unmentionable other parts still on his lips, he turned around and embraced her face with all the passion of own lips and face, ready at last to give it to her with the Hound, grind it into her piety, yes, damn all piety, thought Alois—damned churchmouse wife, damned church!—he was back from the dead, some kind of miracle had rescued him, yes, he was all there, his pride and honor like a sword, and never before a

night like this, better than a storm at sea! And then it went on beyond such moments, for she—the most angelic woman in Braunau—was giving herself over with a prime lust to accept the Devil, yes, she knew he was there with Alois and herself, all three were now drowning in the spurts that came out of him and then out of her, and I certainly knew for I was the third presence, I rode with them into the caterwauling falls of this coming together, Alois and myself filling the womb of Klara Poelzl Hitler, yes, I knew the moment when a new creation was conceived, was seized, for I, too, was there, I was representing the Evil One. Yes, I was present at this conception, even as the Angel Gabriel was the servant of Jehovah on that momentous night in Nazareth. So did I appear on this July night nine months and ten days before Adolf Hitler would be born on April 20, 1889. Yes, I was there as a high officer in the finest intelligence service that has ever existed.

BOOK FOUR

-1-

Titles in our domain are changeable. Given the needs of the occasion, I am known as the Mandarin, the Prince, the Impersonator, the Aide, or, (since I will not be present in visible form through the events to come) I will term myself a phantom. I particular role does not matter. I remain an instrument of the Devil.

That will not be comfortable for many readers. What with the pronounced dominance of the technological world in the Twenty-First Century, an unspoken agreement seems to exist among many of the most well-educated that there is no such entity as the Devil. Among American and

European intelligentsia, there is no readiness to postulate a conflict between Satan and the Lord. Rather, the New Technological World is fiercely in need of a universe subject to reason. While the existence of God is acceptable to some scientists, numerous high officials, and a horde of church-goers who see Him as All-good, All-powerful, the notion that there is another entity equal or nearly equal to God is not to be posited. Not in the Twenty-First Century. There can be one Mystery, but not two! Sophisticated men and women do not often give credence to the supposition that God and the devil are still very much in existence and very much at war.

There need be no surprise, then, that the general understanding of Adolf Hitler's personality is blurred. He is, after all, a third mystery, the most mysterious human of the century, a man, when all is said, who was all-too-human, if, it will be agreed, the average man or woman does possess large funds of the petty and the inhumane. Nonetheless, over the years, as I will yet do my best to explain, I did grow able to comprehend his psyche. How can I not take pride in this? As a specimen of humanity, he was close to unmeasurable. He developed into the wild beast of the century, this all-too-

modest-looking client with his gargoyle of a mustache, who, in the beginning, even I belittled as “little Adolf,” yes, I knew him when we still referred to the young man who grew out of the boy as “little Adolf with the big ideas.”

I can state that as a newborn he was a most typical Klara Poelzl product. That is, he was close to desperately unhealthy. Indeed, he terrified Klara every time a drop of snot oozed out of his nose or a bubble of sputum popped up from his infant lips.

It is probably true that she was ready to die if he did not live. Devils are sound at anticipating motive (the more sordid, the better), but our predictive attempts fade at the borders of mortality. We are obliged to recognize that God does have a final power to decide where and when a human being will die. Take the extreme example of an airplane that has just crashed. Let us say we are responsible for the malfunction. Nonetheless, we do not have the power to destroy everyone on board. Our Adversary (God) determines the result. In most such cases, He will have to accept what we have succeeded in bringing off. It is too costly for God to countermand us. Do not assume that it requires no exceptional effort for Him to save a few

people trapped on that edge of extinction—airplane crashes involve so many factors! Indeed, He could not even save His Son, (as we are never tired of reminding our clients!) but there are occasions when a death we looked to create does not occur. From time to time, even in extreme difficulties, God still disposes.

Be it understood, then, that even such mortal questions come down to the measure of expenditure. A most useful rule of thumb—for human endeavor as well—is that all wars are ultimately determined by who can bear the cost. Sometimes, it is prodigiously expensive for God to war with us. To keep this understanding alive—that He is not All-Powerful—our Maestro demands that we try not to speak of the Lord as God, but as the D.K. (What D.K. means, will be explained before long.)

For now, however, allow me to take up Klara and her condition as she became a mother for the fourth time.

The attention she gave to Adolf's early days would have been seen as hysteria in any woman who had less cause for concern, but then, Klara was living at the edge of the abyss. Recollections of her first illicit joining with

Alois were pervaded by the penetratingly corrupt smell of the sickroom as Gustav, Ida, and Otto were lost one by one in the same few months of the same year. She had prayed devoutly to God to save them. He had chosen to ignore her. As she saw it, that rebuke could only confirm the wretched evil of her condition. So she looked to go back to her feelings on the day she first met Alois. His visit in Spital came when she was sixteen, and she had never seen a man who disturbed her so directly, so physically—she fell back a full step on their meeting at the door. She might as well have received a blow to the stomach.

Yet she had also admired Alois, immensely, and at once. Her mother had an expression on her face Klara had not seen before. For one instant, there in full pride and longing, Johanna did look beautiful. In the next instant, Klara felt a closeness to her mother that was more than their family sense of sharing the same bed-rags of existence, no, it was as if she inhabited her mother's heart for the blink of an eye, and then felt the full force of the pang that followed. She was able to feel all of her mother's old desire at the exact

moment they both saw Alois. If one may speak of a pang of joy, she felt indeed just such a bolt.

We need not, however, journey again along the back and forth of Klara's passion for Alois, nor return to the depths of her piety. By the time Adolf was born, she had formed the habit of washing her mouth every morning with laundry soap (Alois was now full of a predilection—especially in late pregnancy—to put her head onto the Hound and keep it there, one big hand on her neck until the discharge of his needs was complete.)

No surprise then if her love was for the baby. So soon as Adolf gave some real indication of living—after two weeks he would smile with delight at the approach of her face—she began to believe that God might be kind to her this time, that He could even be ready to forgive. Would He be ready to spare this child? Was His Wrath lessened? Had He even given her an angel? Such is the nature of pious hope! Next, she had a dream where an angel told her to have nothing to do with her husband. Not in bed! Such is the nature of pious obligation.

Alois soon had to face the possibility that a will of iron, when forged by prayer, can be quite as powerful in a woman as a highly-developed biceps on a man. At first, Alois could not believe that her refusal to let him touch her was not more than a whim, nor a new species of drawn-out enticement. “You women go back and forth like a kitten chasing its tail,” he told her. Then, deciding that rebellion such as this was to be mercilessly crushed, he seized her buttocks with one hand and a breast with the other.

She bit him on the wrist hard enough to draw blood. Whereupon he cuffed her, leaving Klara with a bruised eye. Gott im Himmel! He was obliged next morning to beg her not to go out until her eye was no longer discolored. For a week, his hand bandaged, he did the shopping after work—no tavern for those nights. After which, the bruise gone, he still had to give up what he considered to be his irrevocable rights, and Alois slept in a huddle on his side of the bed.

Since this state was to be maintained for close to three years, it will certainly be worth returning to the solutions he found to raise such a matrimonial siege. But, for now, we stay close to Klara. An intensity of

emotion is always attractive to demons and devils, even as farmers dream of black soil for future crops.

It need hardly be underlined that the death of Otto, Gustav and Ida, proved useful to us even if we had not been the ones to effect it. Obviously, it intensified Klara's adoration of Adolf past any usual measure of large maternal love. When he began to scream every time she kissed his lips, she came to understand that it was the odor of lye on her mouth. But since Alois had now been driven to his side of the bed, there was no longer a need to wash with it in the morning. Therefore, she could kiss Adolf even as he gurgled obligingly.

It hardly required special insight for us to know that this could prove useful. Excessive mother-love is almost as promising to us as the void of mother-love. We were keyed to look for excess of every kind, good or bad, loving or hateful, too much or too little of anything. Every exaggeration of honest sentiment contributes to our aims.

When it comes to turning a child into a client, we follow a reliable rule of thumb. An incestuous procreation followed by swarms of mother-love will

offer rich possibilities. When the event has been fortified by the presence of the E.O. at conception, there is every reason to expect that the child can develop exceptional possibilities. If it lives. We lose so many. All too often, the D.K. is aware of our choice and, heartlessly—I will say this about Him!—yes, God removes them heartlessly! This can happen no matter the cost to Himself. The cost to Himself? A curious calculation is present. The D.K. is not insensitive to the hopes of those who surround the child. The early death of an exceptional child can demoralize a family. Even when the D.K. knows, therefore, that a given individual belongs in good part to us, He hesitates. Sometimes, He does not wish to take on the collateral damage to the family. Besides, His Cudgels can always look to steal the boy or girl back from us.

So the D.K. is respectful of mother-love when it is all-embracing. It will come as no surprise then that many artists, ogres, geniuses, killers, and an occasional savior live to maturity because God chose not to dispose of them. The first element of mutual recognition in the struggle between the D.K. and the E.O. is probably the understanding that no single splendid human quality can ever prevail by itself, unaltered by either. Even the

noblest, most self-sacrificing and generous mother can produce a monster provided we are there. All the same, this is not a game where one can count on the end result. That is why investing in the newborn is often an unbalanced gamble for both the Maestro and the Lord.

But I can see by now that further explanation of the conditions, limitations, and ineffable powers of the separate world that I inhabit, is necessary or too little will be understood.

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The Lord, as the Maestro never fails to remind us, is not Infinite. The unholy secret of the local heavens is that God and the Devil exist within parameters. Call them paradoxes if you must, but even divine powers suffer constraint. I will add that many primitive tribes, as well as the Egyptians and the Greeks, were more closely attuned than modern men and women to the vagaries and boundaries of divine power. It was the theologians of the Jews, the Christians, and the Moslems who described infinite amplitude to God, and we have profited from their error ever since.

So, yes, the war proceeds, and we devils are still confronted daily by a formidable army of angels. (We choose to call them Cudgels!)

These warring forces ought to be familiar to anyone who has read "Paradise Lost." I would note that devils are often well-versed in literary classics. I cannot speak for the angels, but our Maestro sees literary insight as a complement to our work with humans. John Milton is high, then, in our arcana of poets and novelists who are not unforgivably second-rate because of sentimental inexactitudes. John Milton did provide some outline, after all, of the contest between the Two Kingdoms. No matter how inaccurate his details, he offered a suggestion of the manner in which our armies confronted each other at the commencement of the divine estrangement when hordes of early angels first separated into opposed camps.

One can offer respect, then, to that great blind man even if his suppositions are seriously out of date. No longer do angels and devils wage war in phalanx. Rather, we are artfully installed now in every corner of human behavior. To present a closer notion of the sinuosities, salients, neuterings, and recesses of our war, I would start therefore with the three

central elements of present-day strife—the divine, the satanic, and the human. God and His angelic cohort strive to bring men, women, and children under His Guidance. Our Maestro, with the aid of his representatives, look to direct these same humans in opposed directions. Until the Middle Ages, human beings brought no vital role to this contest. They were pawns. Hence the original concept: Two Kingdoms. By now, however, we have to take each individual man or woman into account. We are obliged to. Many, if not most, humans, now do their best to be beholden neither to God nor to the Maestro. They seek to be free. They often remark (if most sententiously) "I want to discover who I am!" Humans have become so vain (through technology) that more than a number expect by now to become independent of both of us, God and Devil alike.

This, it can be repeated, is but a first approach to the contradictions embedded in existence, a sketch of the complexity of apparently simple events. This much explained, I would add that I most certainly do plan to draw a portrait of the early life of this Adolf Hitler. I would add that I have a skilled devil's ability to enter many a human mind.

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I can recover, if necessary, the concealed, even long-buried memories of a client. Such power, however, consumes Time. (Time is a word I capitalize since for us, as well as for the angels, it is a resource comparable to how Money serves as a matrix for humans.) We are always calculating the Time we can afford to give each of our clients, and such costs increase when we choose to inhabit people's dreams. My need to acquire more insight always has to be balanced, then, against the increased investment required when working our will upon a person. For this reason, the average human is not often of interest to us. Their powers of insight, memory, and ill intent are

limited. Rather, we look to find men and women who are ready to transgress divine or social laws in the course of carrying off a major endeavor for us.

Such men and women, are rare. More often we have to be content with mediocrities whom we look to make more successful. In our Company, provided we are sufficiently patient, that can produce promotions for oneself. Over many an era, I have had clients whom I was able to develop to the point where they could serve directly in one or another of the Maestro's larger projects. The majority, however, caught in the push-and-pull, the back and forth between their guardian angel and a directing devil like myself, end by producing little that is useful to either Kingdom, and I can certainly recall a few unhappy situations where the guardian angel who was my opposite number came away with the spoils.

At one period in the past, as a result of several such losses, my position suffered. For a time, I was assigned clients of petty origin or modest achievement. I encouraged common soldiers, for instance, to injure the morale of their company by desertion, I served workers and peasants who looked to stir up revolutions, but turned corrupt. I knew a few priests in small

towns who got into trouble with little boys, or estate managers who pilfered funds. I indulged petty barons and counts as they gambled away the last of old holdings, and I might as well list petty suicides, petty thieves, drunken louts, and unfaithful wives (of the worst sort—matched by their male counterparts). I had a horde of clients, but only a few could stimulate my developed instincts. For the most part, I had to serve as proctor for clients born with little who soon proceeded to less. It could have been cause for despair. I did miss the brio that a social summit offers. While I could rarely know whether the Maestro was safeguarding my talents for some future purpose or merely marinating me in various backwaters, I did take hope when on one occasion he chose to remark that I might yet be given a post comparable to some of the epic encounters of our Company during the first three centuries of the Church in Rome. Yes, all of that might be there for me once more, provided I was ready to pay unremitting attention now to my present wretches, thugs, and drunks. I did, and eventually, was selected to oversee the work of a number of minor demons who were keeping watch on a young Austrian family whose developed potentialities might yet prove

astounding. Insignificant at present was this embryo as was his family, but he had ancestral fault-lines full of the intoxicating stink of our old friend, blood-scandal. So I was to observe him more closely after his birth.

I did not dare to ask, but of course I could not, in those years, hide my curiosity, and at this point, the Maestro did choose to speak directly to my thoughts. He said: "Why have I been so interested in this creature not yet born? Can it be that he will yet possess the largest ambition one could possibly encounter? I may propose that you yet take him on full-time. But, remain at ease! It is still no more than a project. It could certainly fail. I know he will need endless instruction. His future terrors must be allayed by the most reassuring experiences you can arrange for him. And you must guard him from receiving any crushing defeats to his ego in his early years. In time, if he develops the greater part of his potential promise, he could, as I say, become your only client. Must I say more? Do pay attention. We may be looking at a major project."

All this was uttered by the E.O. with characteristic irony. We never knew how serious The Master was when he spoke to our mind's ear.

In any case, I dared not ask: What if I fail? Many of our projects do. Particularly, major ones, and this new venture had to remain an outrageous gamble. I felt as if I knew too much. I had been there, after all, when he was conceived.

Now, some readers may have noticed that I have described that event in two modes. Once, I speak as if I was there in that connubial bed. Then again, I have indicated that I was not. Not literally. Nonetheless, in referring to my participation, I am telling the truth just as completely as if I were purveying a lie. For even as we now assume to our scientific confusion that light is both a particle and a wave, so do we devils live in both the lie and the truth, side by side.

The explanation—provided one is ready to follow!—is considerably less difficult than, let us say, Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity.

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Spirits like myself keep what I would call a retroactive relation to Time. Our ability to ingest the experience of lower demons enables higher phantoms like myself to inhabit two moments of Time at once. A devil of rank, I did not have to be present on the night Adolf was conceived. I was able to ingest the exact experience as it took place in Time by calling upon the devil (of lower rank) who had been present in Alois' bed on the original occasion. This devil had certainly plunged into the act directly. I must say that that is always an option for us. We enter into many a cohabitation. On rare occasions, and this was one, a minor devil can even implore the E.O to

be present as well. And he was. The occasion demanded it! Afterward, following my assignment to Klara, Alois, and young Adolf Hitler, the moment of impregnation was repeated for me by the devil who had actually been present that night. It entered my senses with a completeness of odor and carnal detail that can be termed absolute. So, it also happened to me. For practical purposes, I was there. That particular Time became my own. Yes, among us, to be given an exact recollection is equal to being present. So, I also knew from the incomparable intensity of the occasion that this was the rarest event. The E.O. had actually joined with the attendant devil for one instant (even as Jehovah had offered His immanence to Gabriel during another exceptional event.)

While I would not be attached exclusively to Adolf Hitler for many years, the Maestro did place him in my Overview. His life and modest deeds as a boy were conveyed to me over all the years of his childhood. For this reason, I am ready to write about that early life with a confidence no responsible biographer would feel ready to attempt.